Storm Water Impacts- Vehicle Washing

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 Malmstrom operates under a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. This permit allows Malmstrom to discharge storm water from the installation toward the Missouri River by implementing various pollution prevention techniques.

 It is important to recognize that anything that goes into a storm drain ends up going to the Missouri River untreated. This is why washing a vehicle in the street or in a parking lot is not allowed at Malmstrom. It is imperative to take all vehicles (personal or government-owned) to a designated car wash. You may see some car wash soaps that are advertised as biodegradable. While this may the case for the soap, it does nothing more than transport vehicle fluids and sediment. The vehicle fluids and sediment can cause line blockages and impact the biology in the waterways. You wouldn’t wash your vehicle next to your favorite fishing spot, so why do it outside of a proper car wash?

The car washes on and off base are designed to handle the dirt, grease, and oil that come off a vehicle. These units also discharge to the sanitary sewer system which is treated by the City of Great Falls before reaching the river.

 Curious what else Malmstrom is doing to curb storm water pollution? You can view Malmstrom’s Storm Water Management Plan located on the Environmental Resources page on malmstrom.af.mil. This document is updated every year and we welcome any comments or questions on how we control storm water pollution. Please contact Mr. Cody Koontz at 406-731-6155, or cody.koontz@us.af.mil for more information.

